



For immediate release
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CPC statement on the delayed release of ruling to reinstate SPD officer following disciplinary appeal

The City of Seattle has been working for nearly seven years under a Consent Decree to rebuild trust and confidence between the police and the community. [The report in The Seattle Times](#) on Monday that the Seattle Police Officer's Guild (SPOG) may have worked with City officials to delay the public release of the ruling in [the excessive force case involving Adley Shepherd](#) until after the City Council's vote to ratify the SPOG contract threatens to critically undermine the progress the City has made.

According to the report, the disciplinary appeal ruling that ordered the City to reinstate Officer Shepherd was issued before the City Council's vote to ratify the SPOG contract and before the City and the Department of Justice appeared in front of Judge Robart for a status conference about the Consent Decree. That ruling was information the public, Councilmembers and the Federal Court should have been immediately apprised of, since it was directly related to the contract.

As the Community Police Commission has pointed out, the loss of reforms to the disciplinary appeals process were a key part of the roll-backs in the SPOG contract. Those reforms were designed to address the very issues that occurred in this ruling.

They had been recommended because of prior cases the community had experienced and were adopted unanimously by the City Council. So the fact that a ruling had been issued using the kind of disciplinary appeals decision-making that was supposed to be ended but was instead kept in the new contract was critically important information for the public, the City Council, and the Court to know.

NOTE: For more background on the significance of the Shepherd case and the SPOG contract's step back from the reforms to disciplinary appeals embodied in the 2017 Accountability Ordinance, see the attached information sheet.

It was an arbitrator, as part of the Disciplinary Review Board (DRB), who was the crucial vote that ordered the City to reinstate Shepherd. Despite the fact the new SPOG contract adopted the reform of eliminating the DRB, as the CPC had recommended and the accountability ordinance mandated, the

contract did not keep the reform of no longer allowing officers to choose an alternative route of arbitration, with arbitrators authorized to substitute their judgment for the Chief's, and hearings that bar the public and the media.

This case is yet another example of why those reforms should have been followed through on as promised.

If a decision was made by some City officials and SPOG to keep the public, elected officials and oversight entities from learning about the ruling until after the City Council's vote to ratify the SPOG contract, it is enormously damaging to the community's faith in the police reform process. City leaders must determine what occurred, take steps to ensure it doesn't happen again, and work to repair the damage already done.

About the Community Police Commission:

The CPC listens to, amplifies, and builds common ground among communities affected by policing in Seattle. We champion policing practices centered in justice and equity. The CPC is independent and led by volunteer commissioners.